

State of California
Business, Transportation & Housing Agency
Department of Transportation

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS
Adoption of Findings For Future
Consideration of Funding
7-Ven-101 22.0/23.7
Action Item

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CTC Meeting: August 22-23, 2001

Agenda Item: 2.2c(2)

Original Signed By

MARK LEJA

Acting Chief Financial Officer

August 1, 2001

ADOPTION OF FINDINGS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING
ROUTE 101 IN VENTURA COUNTY

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The attached resolution proposes to adopt the Findings for the following project for which an Environmental Impact Report has been completed:

- Route 101 in Ventura County- Widen the freeway, revise an interchange and replace the Santa Clara River Bridges in the Cities of Oxnard and San Buenaventura.

The project is programmed in the 2000 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for \$95.0 million (\$84.4 million capital funds and \$10.6 million support funds) and the 2000 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) for \$28.9 million (\$22.7 million capital funds and \$6.2 million support funds), for a combined total of \$123.9 million (\$107.1 capital funds and \$16.8 million support funds).

The approved Environmental Impact Report has been transmitted to Commission staff.

The Department has approved the project for construction. This approval and the resultant filing of the Notice of Determination with the Office of Planning and Research will satisfy the environmental requirements for this stage of the project planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-02-05.

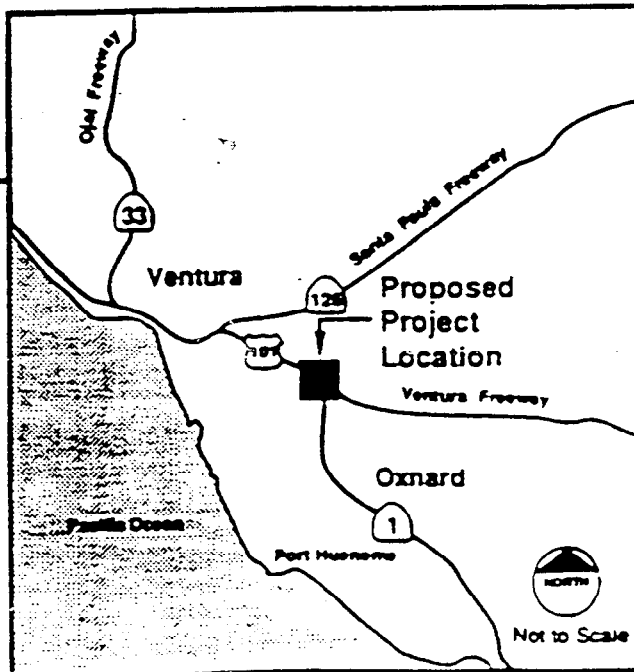
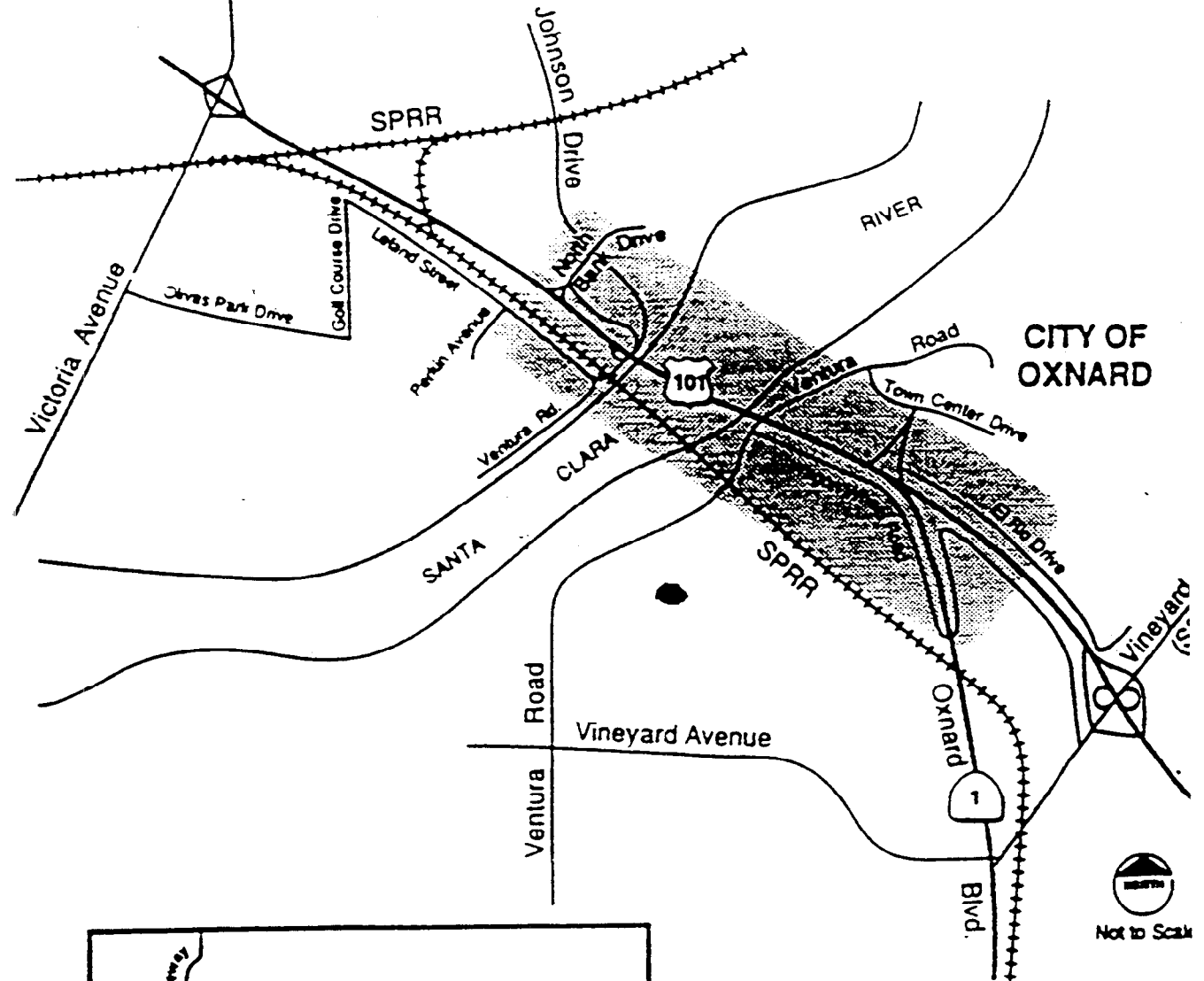
Attachment

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Resolution for Adoption of Findings For Future Consideration of Funding
7-Ven-101 22.0/23.7
Resolution E-02-05**

- 1.1 WHEREAS**, an Environmental Impact Report has been prepared for a project to widen Route 101, revise an interchange and replace the Santa Clara River bridges in the Cities of Oxnard and San Buenaventura, Ventura County, and
- 1.2 WHEREAS**, the Department has certified that the Environmental Impact Report has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation; and
- 1.3 WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Environmental Impact Report; and
- 1.4 WHEREAS**, written Findings indicate that specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations make it infeasible to avoid or fully mitigate to a level less than significant the effects associated with noise; and
- 1.5 WHEREAS**, the above significant effect is acceptable when balanced against the facts as set forth in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.
- 2.1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby adopt those Findings and Statement Overriding Considerations to allow for future consideration of funding.

CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA



Route 101 Highway Improvement

PROJECT VICINITY MAP

Figure 1.0-1

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CEQA FINDINGS FOR ROUTE 101 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
FROM VINEYARD AVENUE TO MONTALVO SPUR OVERHEAD,
IN THE CITIES OF OXNARD AND SAN BUENAVENTURA
VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

The following information is presented to comply with Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines and Section 1059.6 of the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations. Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which incorporates by reference the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), except as amended. The two documents are the basic source of information for these findings.

Mitigation monitoring will be in accordance with the Caltrans' standard program contained in Article 1-2.8 of the Environmental Handbook, Volume 1 and in accordance with CEQA and NEPA.

The following effects have been identified in the EIR as resulting from the project. Effects not found to be significant have not been included.

NOISE IMPACTS

Adverse Environmental Effect: The project will increase noise levels to exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC).

Findings: Specific economic, social or other considerations make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the Final EIR.

Statement of Facts: In the Noise Study Report of August 5, 1999, the sound levels at measured sites are a combination of the State Route 101 Freeway, on- and off-ramp traffic and local street traffic. A noise impact was identified for Sites #1 Motel 6, #2 Wagon Wheel Mobile Home Park and #3 Residences, as shown in Table 4.8-1 Noise Level Results.

Proposed mitigation was explored and Sites #2 and #3 were disqualified because of cost effectiveness per dwelling unit. A soundwall at Site #2 is not feasible because the necessary length of soundwall that will provide a 5dBA noise reduction cannot be constructed without encroaching on the frontage row of adjacent businesses. Site #1 was disqualified because it was not considered reasonable according to Section 2.8.3d of the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol which states that noise abatement is normally not considered reasonable for commercial areas.

The Supplemental Noise Study Report of July 28, 2000, investigated and identified all commercial land use activities for noise impacts, including activity categories B, C and D for developed (commercial areas) and for undeveloped lands. The commercial sites of Newport Boats (#4), Plaza Auto Sales (#7), Wagon Wheel Motel (#6), the automobile dealers on Leland St. (#8) and the Ventura County Fire Station on El Rio Dr. (#5) were investigated for freeway noise impacts.

It has been determined that none of these sites meet the criteria for noise abatement. The Wagon Wheel Motel is in a commercial zone. A soundwall at this location is not feasible because the necessary length of soundwall at this location is not feasible because the necessary length of soundwall that will provide a 5dBA noise reduction cannot be constructed without encroaching on the frontage row of adjacent businesses. (See Table 4.8-2 for sound wall insertion loss results.)

The entire area within the project has been investigated for commercial developments of land-use activity C. The commercial developments consist mainly of shopping centers, automobile dealerships and industrial centers. Our field investigation identified all commercial areas with frequent to limited external human use. It has been determined that the future noise levels for receiver Site #8 will not exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). Future noise levels for receivers 4,5,6 and 7 will exceed their respective NAC. However, these sites are not considered reasonable according to Section 2.8.3d of the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol which states that noise abatement is normally not considered reasonable for commercial areas.

The Statement of Overriding Consideration, *infra*, includes further statements of specific economic, social and other considerations which support adoption of the subject project instead of the identified alternatives to the project.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR STATE ROUTE 101
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FROM VINEYARD AVENUE TO MONTALVO SPUR
OVERHEAD, IN THE CITIES OF OXNARD AND SAN BUENAVENTURA,
VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

The following information is presented to comply with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines and Section 1509.6 of the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations. Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which incorporates by reference the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Report (SDEIR), except as amended. The two documents are the basic source of information for this statement of overriding considerations.

UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Significant noise impacts would occur to sensitive receptors along the State Route 101 Improvement Project. Noise abatement measures were not found to be reasonable or feasible for residences or the commercial properties along State Route 101 in accordance with the criteria established by Federal Aid Policy Guide ([FAPG], FHWA 1995), Highway Traffic Analysis, Abatement Procedures and Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol

Overriding considerations that support approval of this recommended project are as follows:

PROJECT NEEDS AND BENEFITS

The proposed State Route 101 Improvement Project is located along U.S. Highway 101 (State Route 101) between Vineyard Avenue at postmile (PM) 22.0 in the City of Oxnard on the southeast and Montalvo Spur Overhead at PM 24.0 in the City of San Buenaventura (Ventura) on the northwest. The project encompasses a distance of approximately 3.2 kilometers (2.0 miles). The project would serve major north-south traffic movement along State Route 101, which connects southern, central, and northern California. State Route 101 is used for interstate, intrastate, interregional, and intra-regional travel and shipping.

As a result of current and anticipated future demand, State Route 101 would require capacity improvements on the existing inadequate facility to accommodate present or future transportation needs. Deteriorating traffic levels of service (LOS)¹ projected to occur over the next 20 years indicate congestion and delays would continue to increase unless improvements are made. Even

¹ Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of traffic flow that ranges from a letter designation of "A" through "F." "A" denotes free-flowing traffic conditions with no delays, "F" denotes stagnated traffic with excessive delays.

with improved transit and transportation demand management programs, future traffic demands on the highway are anticipated to exceed the capacity of the existing facility by the year 2020.

Currently, heavy congestion occurs along many portions of the highway during peak hours, causing substantial delays to motorists. These delays are caused by regional traffic commuting between Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. Intersecting highways within the western Ventura County region include State Route 33 (SR 33), State Route 126 (SR 126), State Route 1 (Oxnard Boulevard) and State Route 232/Vineyard Avenue (SR 232).

Accident data for State Route 101 shows that rear-end accidents are the predominant type of accident during the period studied. Half of the accidents on northbound State Route 101 were rear-end collisions; approximately one-third of the accidents on southbound State Route 101 were rear-end collisions. In general, accidents occur more frequently in congested stop-and-go conditions (such as at the conditions that exist at Wagon Wheel Road and Johnson Drive interchanges). These accidents, in turn, cause vehicles to move more slowly. When congestion is reduced or eliminated, accident rates are generally reduced. Without improvements, actual accident rates may continue to exceed expected rates in the project area.

The existing left bridge (southbound) was built in 1932 and widened in 1968. The existing right bridge (northbound) was built in 1968. These structures carry traffic on State Route 101 over the Santa Clara River and West Frontage Road. The bridges are structurally deficient based on Caltrans engineering studies. (*Supplemental Final Hydrology & Hydraulics Report for Santa Clara River, March 4, 1999.*)

A project is needed to ensure the public has continued access to a safe and structurally sound bridge. Major degradation of the riverbed surrounding the Santa Clara River pilings has occurred as a result of scour. The degrading riverbed at both bridge sites has seriously threatened the integrity of the structures. The replacement of the existing structures is being proposed in order to secure this vital transportation system and to ensure the safety of the public that utilizes this major north-south corridor.

Highway improvements proposed include:

- Widening State Route 101 from six to eight lanes between Vineyard Avenue (State Route 232) in the City of Oxnard and Montalvo Spur Overhead in the City of San Buenaventura;
- Modification of the State Route 101 interchange at Oxnard;
- Reconstruction of the Ventura Road undercrossing; and
- Replacement and widening of the Santa Clara River Bridges from seven to twelve lanes.
- Modification of Wagon Wheel off-ramp;
- Creation of new access on Wagon Wheel Road to the Esplanade Shopping Center.

The Preferred Alternative would attain the project goals and objectives as described below:

- Improve the flow of traffic along State Route 101.
- Provide increased traffic capacity by providing additional lanes.
- Improve traffic operations at the existing Oxnard Boulevard.
- Eliminate bottleneck that occurs at the Santa Clara River bridges.

- Replace structurally deficient bridges.
- Enhance safety characteristics on State Route 101.
 - Reduce congestion, which leads to rear-end accidents.
- Reduce response time for emergency vehicles.
 - Reduce congestion, thereby reducing response times.

ALTERNATIVES

Studies for improvement of State Route 101 from Vineyard Avenue to Johnson Drive have been underway for several years and many different plans have been evaluated. The previous studies include two Project Study Reports (PSRs), three supplements to the first PSR, and two Project Reports. These studies evaluated various State Route 101 alternatives in terms of environmental effects, construction and right-of-way costs, and the ability to meet regional transportation goals. Based on the screening process used in prior studies, several alternatives were withdrawn from further consideration because they would not meet the project purpose and need. The alternatives withdrawn from further consideration include the following:

- Perkin Avenue Alternative
- North Bank Diamond Interchange and North Bank Urban Interchange under State Route 101
- North Bank Diamond Interchange and North Bank Urban Interchange over State Route 101
- Johnson Drive over State Route 101
- Loop Off-Ramp to Oxnard Boulevard Alternative
- Modified Diamond with Direct Connectors Alternative
- Diamond with Direct Connector and Southbound Ramp to Wagon Wheel Road
- Diamond with Direct Connectors and Southbound Slip Ramp to Wagon Wheel Road
- Oxnard Boulevard Urban Interchange over and under State Route 101
- Oxnard Boulevard over State Route 101
- Johnson Drive Ramps under Railroad with Revised Track Grade
- Johnson Drive Ramps under Railroad with Track Grade Unchanged
- Johnson Drive Ramps under Railroad with Intersection at Leland Street
- State Route 101/Oxnard Boulevard Miscellaneous Alternatives
- Widening of Existing Santa Clara River Bridges

In addition to these alternatives, local agencies have discussed the feasibility of new Santa Clara River crossings between Saticoy and the river's terminus at the Pacific Ocean. Five river crossings were analyzed:

- State Route 101 bridges
- State Route 101 bridges and a Kimball Road crossing
- State Route 101 bridges, a Kimball Road crossing, and a new southwest crossing at Ventura Road

- State Route 101 bridges, a Kimball Road crossing, and a new northeast crossing at Petit Avenue
- State Route 101 bridges, a Kimball Road crossing, a new southwest crossing, and a new northeast crossing

These alternative bridges were no longer considered after the 2010 traffic projects showed that the addition of parallel bridges on city streets would not eliminate the need to widen the State Route 101 bridges to 12 lanes (DKS Associates, *Final Report, Oxnard-San Buenaventura State Route 101 Corridor Study*, July 1990).

CONCLUSIONS

The State Route 101 Improvement Project is consistent with the *1998 Ventura County Congestion Management Program*, which identifies widening and improving Route 101 from Vineyard to Montalvo Spur Overhead as a recommended improvement to avoid further traffic congestion. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has determined that the project is also consistent with the *Regional Mobility Plan*. The project is included in the *SCAG Capital Improvement Program*, prepared with information from the *1998/99 to 2004/2005 Regional Transportation Improvement Program*.

The Preferred Alternative would satisfy the project purpose and need. Throughout the planning process, the project team has been responsive to the public and others with an interest in the State Route 101 improvements. This responsiveness has led to the absence of written or oral comments disagreeing with the project, or any of its components, either by the public or interested agencies.

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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